

**Department of Homeland Security/FEMA
U.S. Fire Administration
National Fire Academy Board of Visitors
Meeting Agenda
July 12-13, 2005
Building H, Room 300**

Attendees:

The following National Fire Academy Board of Visitors (NFA BOV) members were present for the meeting:

Dr. Robert S. Fleming (Chairperson)
Professor, Rowan University
1406 Heather Lane
West Chester, Pennsylvania 19380

Chief Donald R. Oliver (Vice Chairperson)
Wilson Fire/Rescue Services
307 West Hines Street
Wilson, North Carolina 27893

Ms. Helen Johnson
Executive Director
State Firemen's and Fire Marshals'
Association of Texas
4450 Frontier Trail
Austin, Texas 78745

Captain Jack Reall
President, Columbus Firefighters Union,
IAFF 67
1380 Dublin Road, Suite 103
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Mr. Gary Tokle
National Fire Protection Association
1 Batterymarch Park
Quincy, Massachusetts 02169-7471

Dr. Sandy Bogucki
Associate Professor
Section of Emergency Medicine
Yale University School of Medicine
464 Congress Avenue
New Haven, Connecticut 06519-1315

Mr. Art Cota, Division Chief (via teleconference)
State Fire Training
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, California 94244-2460

The following member was not present for the meeting:

Chief Warren McDaniels (Retired)
7097 W. Tamaron Boulevard
New Orleans, Louisiana 70128

FEMA/National Fire Academy (NFA)/U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) staff in attendance:

Dr. Denis Onieal, Superintendent, NFA
Dr. Kirby Kiefer, Deputy Superintendent, NFA
Mr. Ron Face, Director, NETC Management, Operations and Support Services
Ms. Cindy Wivell, Secretary, NFA
Ms. Trina Clever, Instructional Systems Specialist, NFA
Mr. Ed Kaplan, Education Program Specialist, NFA
Ms. Terry Gladhill, Program Analyst, NFA
Ms. Maury Grundy, Fire Program Specialist, USFA
Ms. Tonya Long, Program Support Assistant, USFA

CONVENE MEETING / WELCOME: Dr. Robert Fleming, Chair, Board of Visitors

Dr. Robert Fleming convened the meeting at 8:30 a.m. on July 12 and proceeded to review the agenda. Instead of having a series of short topics for discussion, it was decided to change the format and have three topics for the agenda so that they could be explored more in depth.

The BOV members reviewed a rough draft of a memorandum addressed to Fire Administrator R. David Paulison. The document outlines five recommendations that were discussed at the April 2005 BOV meeting. With no comments, the document will be finalized and sent to Mr. Paulison.

SUPERINTENDENT'S OVERVIEW: Dr. Denis Onieal

Dr. Onieal discussed the recent National Incident Management System (NIMS) Train-the-Trainer rollout and the feedback received. It included the delivery of three different courses.

EXTENDED BRIEFINGS

Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education: Mr. Ed Kaplan

Mr. Kaplan gave an overview of the Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) Strategic Direction. He distributed handouts which included a FESHE Strategic Direction Summary, a small poster of the National Professional Development Model, Competencies Elements Tables, and the FESHE Strategic Outcomes and Project Matrix charts.

The National Professional Development Model displays a stove-piped system of professional development that integrates training, education, and certification.

The Competencies Elements Tables are crosswalks of training and education, and competencies and standards for Fire Officer I through IV. Chief Don Oliver pointed out that there needed to be some discussion on the Chief Fire Officer Designation (CFOD) and how it fits. Dr. Fleming said that from the standpoint of an educational facility, there may be some feedback on the comparison of the competencies. Mr. Gary Tokle asked why the NFA courses were listed under

the heading of training instead of education. Mr. Kaplan responded that the education column lists the college courses. There was much discussion among the Board members on the two headings: education and training. The Board felt the headings should be removed.

Mr. Kaplan explained the professional development summits that are being held, and distributed a copy of the PowerPoint® presentation from the Mid-Atlantic Professional Development Summit he attended in Richmond, Virginia, on May 25, 2005.

The FESHE Strategic Outcomes Handout includes end outcomes/ real payoffs such as:

- a national, integrated, competency-based professional development system resulting in critical credentials (degrees and certification);
- a national, integrated system of higher education from associate's degree to doctorate;
- a well-trained and educated fire service that creates fire-safe communities, establishes risk reduction plans, and minimizes line-of-duty deaths and injuries; and
- the fire service as a profession comprising a research-based discipline; a nationally accredited and independent testing process, such as the CFOD; and a universally recognized and reciprocal system to acquire knowledge and skills.

When asked about a timeline, Mr. Kaplan didn't want to advocate this until the professional development matrix is right. He anticipates it will be achievable in 10 years. He hopes that within 5 years, at least 10 States are up and running.

Approximately 10 to 11 State training systems are involved in FESHE. To be successful, Chief Oliver suggested reaching out to those participating States. The fire chiefs could help with the push.

If we are at the point where we want to be in 5 years, what type of resources would be required to continue? Mr. Kaplan is looking for outside funding sources. The professional development summits held in the States are a good venue.

Other activities that Mr. Kaplan is pursuing:

- working with Chief Ron Siarnicki of the National Fallen Firefighter Foundation on the "Everyone Goes Home" Initiative.
- converting six courses to online/Web-only format. Target date for conversion is November 1 for delivery in January 2006.

**American Council on Education Credit Recommendation/Evaluation:
Ms. Trina Clever**

Ms. Clever reviewed the American Council on Education's (ACE) College Credit Recommendation Service which evaluates and makes credit recommendations on the basis of a thorough and comprehensive evaluation process. The campus currently uses this service on an annual basis. ACE's college credit recommendations are published annually in a guide and will be available on the Web in the fall. ACE's recommendations are used for advanced college placement, college electives, employability, and job advancement.

Part of Ms. Clever's presentation included accessing the ACE Web site and walking BOV members through some of the information available on line.

The NFA currently offers 127 courses with ACE credit recommendations. Benefits to the NFA include quality control for the courses, providing a nationally recognized outside objective academic review of the curriculum, and contributing to the professional development of the fire service. ACE also may make friendly recommendations for improvements to the courses. Each course is on a 3-year cycle for review, with new courses reviewed automatically. Thirty-eight courses were reviewed by ACE this year; which included three to four new ones and one with significant revisions. An ACE review also contributes to the professional development of the fire service.

Two distance learning courses currently have ACE accreditation. They are the *Fire Service Supervision* and the *Community Safety Educators* self-study courses. ACE has requested that NFA implement a proctoring process for distance learning course within the year. The Academy is currently working on this issue.

One of the new initiatives of ACE is the transcript service. It is a way for students to have everything in one database. Students would need to give training and educational information to ACE who would verify and add it to the ACE transcript. There would be a one-time fee of \$45.

Another initiative is the Joint Fire Service Review. The objective is to extend ACE credit recommendations to the handoff courses as well as the resident courses. This would extend the ACE credit for NFA courses to our State partners who qualify as ACE participating organizations.

Dr. Fleming asked if minor course revisions create a need for ACE review; for example, the 94 courses that were updated with NIMS information. Dr. Onieal responded that since the learning objective for the courses did not change, there was no need for ACE review. The "tipping" comes when a course has significant changes in its outcome.

If a course is not at postsecondary level, would it be reviewed? In the short term, it would not be reviewed. The State and local levels should be offering the vocational level of training.

Since USFA doesn't grant grades, how is the grade requirement met? As long as NFA has some way to measure pass/fail and some type of rubric measurement, ACE is more concerned with the integrity of the evaluation/testing.

Chief Oliver expressed the need for course revisions.

Dr. Onieal noted that the value added for the ACE review is academic validation; i.e., an outside source reviewing NFA's courses and ensuring the academic rigor.

NFA Evaluation Center: Ms. Terry Gladhill/Ms. Maury Grundy

Ms. Gladhill gave an overview of the NFA Evaluation Center, dating back to its inception in 1980. She distributed sample evaluations and the resulting reports. The evaluation form was just approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The evaluation program includes collection of both level one (end-of-class) and level three (training impact) data. There is a 70 percent response rate for level three. The Evaluation Center also provides conference evaluation support. Support is provided for FESHE, Training Resources and Data Exchange (TRADE), Prevention Advocacy Resources and Data Exchange (PARADE), and Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP). A FESHE evaluation report was provided to the Board members; the questionnaire is currently being reviewed by OMB. Ms. Gladhill offered to send to the Board members end-of-course data for the courses they planned to visit later in the day.

A Web database application is currently under development. Ms. Grundy explained that this application will be used for the collection and maintenance of student evaluation data. It will allow students to submit evaluations online; training specialists and managers to review aggregated course evaluation reports in real time; and instructors to generate custom evaluation reports based on student feedback and compare performance to other instructors. The Evaluation Center will be able to process data in a more timely and efficient manner. By submitting the form electronically, students will be able to be more candid.

Ms. Grundy gave an online demonstration of the new evaluation form and some of its features, including a "save for later" feature. The online form requires use of a fire department ID (FDID), which can be looked up while actually completing the form. Dr. Onieal said using the FDID can verify if the fire rate has gone up or down in an area, and also gives us some knowledge of the impact of the NFA. It will tie together a lot of data. FY2006 is being targeted for testing and implementation. The hope is to demo and pilot the Web-based evaluation in the first quarter of FY2006.

Dr. Onieal asked if it would be possible for the members of the BOV to be given access numbers for the aggregate data. Ms. Grundy will check and discuss with Ms. Gladhill.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Dr. Onieal said for this meeting he wanted the Board members to take a look at underlying systems such as FESHE, ACE, and evaluation data collection and analysis. The fourth piece is tying the FDID data into the fire loss data.

Dr. Fleming asked for feedback from the Board on the way things were done this time with the agenda. The members felt the format was a success and very informative.

The official meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m. for the day. From 2:30 to 5:00 p.m., individual BOV members visited and observed individual NFA classrooms. Each member was given a list of the courses in session this week.

MEETING RECONVENES

Dr. Fleming reconvened the meeting at 8:30 a.m. on July 13.

NATIONAL EMERGENCY TRAINING CENTER (NETC) UPDATE: Mr. Ron Face

Mr. Face was present for the BOV meeting in Fire Administrator David Paulison's absence. Due to the announcement today by Secretary Chertoff of the reorganization of the Department of Homeland Security, Mr. Paulison was not able to attend this meeting and sent his apologies.

Campus support activities are going well. Every year, USFA strives to have procurement packages ready to go in case the agency has additional funding come available. Mr. Ken Burris, FEMA's Chief Operating Officers, asked USFA to have ready a list of items that are not funded. This has happened the past several years.

The inventory of the campus is not yet complete. The programs portion has been completed. The procurement package for the construction of the new building is ready to go.

Deferred on-campus maintenance will be started within the next couple of weeks, using the \$500,000 received for non-emergency issues that had to be put on hold due to lack of funding.

The new delivery date for the admissions system is October 1, 2005. Some of the delay was due to new mandates that had to be built into the system.

Mr. Face also provided updates on the on-campus security elements and the property loss situation.

The water system within the town of Emmitsburg should no longer be an issue. The town should now be able to support new construction and businesses. The tap fee will be negotiated. The topography of Emmitsburg makes it an island in the event of flooding, and the only way to get in and out is through the campus. An Emmitsburg bypass is in the works. An area warning system was implemented. There are three warning alarms in Emmitsburg--two at Mount Saint Mary's University and one here at NETC.

OPEN DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY.

Dr. Onieal gave an update on the credentialing project. Nothing has changed as the USFA Policy and Program Advisory Committee is not in place.

Dr. Fleming made an observation on the classroom visits--they were successful and a valuable part of the agenda. Students provided feedback to the BOV members. For future agendas, he suggested that additional time be allotted for classroom visits.

Chief Oliver asked if there are more or fewer students on campus. Dr. Onieal replied that attendance has remained about the same. Most students are denied due to not completing the application correctly. The new admissions system application will require certain fields to be completed.

There was much discussion on the criticality of revising and developing courses. Dr. Onieal and Dr. Kiefer will be coming up with a plan.

With regard to the upcoming expiration of some Board seats in September, Chief Oliver, Mr. Tokle, and Mr. Art Cota will remain on layover appointments until others are appointed.

Dr. Onieal distributed copies of an article that was taken from the Virginia Social Science Journal, 2005, titled *Lessons Learned: A Comparison of the Uniform Militia Act of 1792 and the Homeland Security Act of 2002*. He also brought to the Board members' attention the work Mr. Kaplan has done with acquiring a residential sprinkler ordinance in Fairfield, Pennsylvania.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dr. Fleming asked for approval of April minutes. Mr. Tokle moved for approval of the minutes as submitted, and Chief Oliver seconded it. All were in favor.

NEXT MEETING

Board members discussed the upcoming on-campus meeting scheduled for October 5-9, 2005 (meeting October 6-8). The Fallen Firefighter Memorial events will be held October 8 and 9. There is a conflict; Dr. Onieal will be speaking at the opening ceremonies at the Fire Department Instructors Conference East on October 6. Dr. Fleming suggested changing the meeting days to Friday and Saturday (October 7 and 8) and travel days to Thursday and Sunday (October 6 and 9). Chief Oliver moved for acceptance of this change, and Ms. Helen Johnson seconded. All were in favor. Based on a Reall/Oliver motion, the group will keep open the option to decide at a later date if there is a need to extend the meeting back to 3 days.

ADJOURNMENT

Chief Oliver moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 a.m.; Ms. Johnson seconded. Meeting adjourned.